

REMARKS

The above amendment and these remarks are responsive to the communication from Examiner Lan Dai T. Truong, mailed 13 Apr 2006.

Claims 1-15 are in the case, none as yet allowed.

Applicants note that while the Office Action Summary indicates that claims 1-15 have been rejected, only claims 1-2, 8, 13-15 have been rejected in the Detailed Action, leaving the status of dependent claims 3-7, and 9-12 uncertain, presumably allowable if the rejections of the independent claims from which they depend are resolved.

35 U.S.C. 112 (First Paragraph)

Claims 1-2, 8, 13-15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph is failing to comply with the written description.

Applicants traverse.

The Examiner states:

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"The disclosure lacks clear written description in a description on how to obtain or authenticate a user to access enterprise service(s). Based on the limitation '...each company group of a plurality of distinct company groups including one or more related companies which use the same accounting codes and procedures, with accounting codes and procedures that vary between company groups...' It is unclear how to access the services based on the relationship of the accounting code, related companies and a plurality of procedures." [Office Action, pages 2-3.]

The quoted material from the independent claims was originally inserted to define what is meant by "company group". In order to respond to the Examiner's rejection, it is best to focus on two elements of Figure 1: company group HR file 374 and user profile table 384. Applicant's invention relates most specifically to the design and use of company group HR file 374, and not directly to how users are authenticated by use of user profile 384. However, reference to user profile 384 is necessary to respond to the rejection.

The manner in which company group HR file 374 is built

is described as follows:

In step 60, on a periodic basis, customer companies provides an HR file containing a list of all employees that are authorized to use RCW with a company grouping ID in a company code field. Hub server 52 merges these HR files 59, 59A into a company group HR file 370 which, in step 70, it transmits through fire wall 372 to application server 376 where it is stored in company group HR file 374.

In step 401, staging table build application reads file 374 and in step 402 moves it to staging table 380 in database server 388. At this point, company group HR file 374 includes an entry for each person authorized by companies within a company group, and that entry includes the information available from the customer companies but not other information, such as company code and location code, required by servers 390, 376 and the SAP system and unavailable from the company HR files 59, 59A. [Specification, page 10, lines 13 to page 11, line 5.]

The manner in which user profile 384 is built and used

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is described as follows:

In step 403, new employee profile build application reads from staging table 380 the authorized users and in step 404 adds to user profile table 384 an entry for each new user. At this point, user profile table includes an entry for all authorized users for a company grouping, but critical information (company code and location code) is missing for newly authorized (or changed) users.

Responsive to a request received at web server 390 from requester browser 46 to enter a transaction on behalf of a user, such as accessing a catalog and submitting a requisition for a commodity or service, in step 407 requisition application 392 accesses user profile table 384 to obtain the user's profile. It determines if the user profile for the user has SAP company code and plant code entries, and if not, executes a new user procedure to complete the preparation of the user profile.

In step 409, for a new user, application 392 accesses plant code table 386. Plant code table 386

includes a table including a plurality of entries, each entry including company group code, company code, and location code fields and a description which is meaningful to prospective users. Each company group code may apply to a plurality of company codes, and each company code to a plurality of location codes. From plant code table 386, requisition application 392 populates in step 408 at browser 46 a pop-down list 396 which includes each combination of company code, location code and description for the user's company group. (The user's company group is input from browser 46 when the user logs on to web server 390.)

The user selects from the pop-down list 396 the location at which he works, which in step 406 is sent back to application 392. In step 410, application 392 populates the user profile entry in user profile table 384 for this user with the company code and location code corresponding to the description at pop-down list 396 selected by the user. This completes the user profile entry for this user, who no longer is a new user and may now proceed to access the financial services provided by the enterprise for the company group of which he is an authorized user.

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If an employee transfers, that is nicely handled by making the person look like a new employee when, in steps 60 and 70 his profile data is submitted to application server 376, which will trigger the above process for updating the entry for the user in user profile table 384. [Specification, page 11, line 6 to page 13, line 4. Emphasis added.]

Thus, in response to the Examiner's rejection, the manner in which services are accessed by a user is clearly set forth. That is, users who have a valid entry in user profile table 384 may access the system resources for the company group to which they have been authorized.

Applicants request that the rejection of claims 1-2, 8, and 13-15 be withdrawn and claims 1-15 allowed.

35 U.S.C. 112 (Second Paragraph)

Claims 1-2, 8, and 13-15 have been rejected for reciting the limitation "the same accounting codes".

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Applicant has amended these claims to correct them, and urges that they be allowed.

Claims 1-2, 8, and 13-15 have been further rejected as being vague and indefinite.

Applicants traverse.

The Examiner states:

"...it is unclear of the limitation '...each company group of a plurality of distinct company groups including one or more related companies which use the same accounting codes and procedures, with accounting codes and procedures that vary between company groups...' and the relationships among accounting codes, a related companies/various company groups and a plurality of procedures in order to access the enterprise services." [Office Action, page 3]

Applicant's specification includes material which clearly sets forth the meaning of company group. Such a company group is a group of companies which use the same accounting codes and procedures, and different company

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groups differ in that they use different accounting codes and procedures. See, for example:

In accordance with the preferred embodiment of the invention, an enterprise provides procurement services to a plurality of customer companies organized in company groups, each company group including one or more related companies which use the same accounting codes and procedures. [Specification, page 8, lines 8-12.]

Applicants have previously responded to the question on how enterprise services are accessed. See the discussion above with respect to user profile table 384, which quotes specification, page 11, line 6 to page 13, line 4.

Applicants urge that claims 1-2, 8, 13-15 be allowed.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Applicants urge that the above amendments be entered and the case passed to issue with claims 1-15.

The Application is believed to be in condition for

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allowance and such action by the Examiner is urged. Should differences remain, however, which do not place one/more of the remaining claims in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to phone the undersigned at the number provided below for the purpose of providing constructive assistance and suggestions in order that allowable claims can be presented, thereby placing the Application in condition for allowance without further proceedings being necessary.

Sincerely,

S. P. Cason, et al.

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